

**Maine Department of Economic and Community Development  
2003 CDBG Planning Grant Program  
Lakes Region Public Safety Study – Town of Raymond**

**SECTION III - DESIGNATION OF PROGRAM AND NATIONAL OBJECTIVE SHEET**

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**Program Designation**

1. Is this a multi-jurisdictional application?

☒ Yes ☐ No

2. If yes, has one local government been designated as the lead applicant?

☒ Yes ☐ No

3. If yes, have all participating or benefiting local governments signed the Cover Sheet/Certification Form?

☐ Yes ☒ No

*Signed certification form: **Raymond, Casco, Naples, Harrison, Bridgton** (fax)*

*Authorized Letter of Support: **Sebago***

*No signature: **Frye Island***

4. Specify which category your planning project relates to:

☒ **Public Facilities/Public Infrastructure**

Economic Development

Housing

Tourism Opportunities

Downtown Revitalization

Historic Preservation

**Designation of National Objective**

If the project that was assisted with CPG funds were implemented, it would meet one of the following National Objectives of the CDBG Program (**Check the appropriate National Objective**):

☒ **Benefit to Low and Moderate Income Persons**



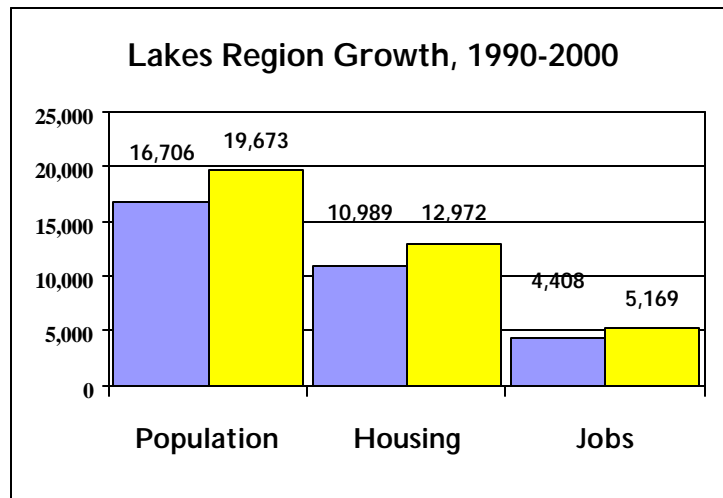
Eliminate Slum/Blight Conditions

**Explain how the above objective will be met:**

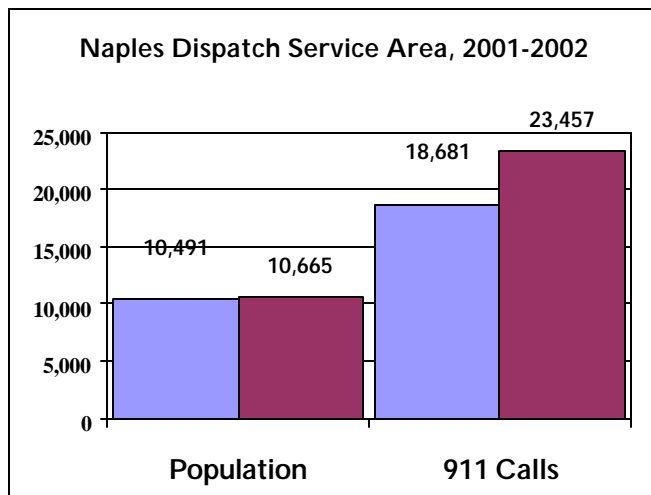
The Lakes Region communities of Bridgton, Casco, Frye Island, Harrison, Naples, Raymond, and Sebago will conduct a planning study on the regionalization of public safety services, including fire, police, emergency medical, and emergency management. The goal of regionalization is to create a consistent, predictable, and satisfactory level of service throughout the Lakes Region that will particularly benefit the elderly, mentally ill, victims of child abuse and domestic violence, and other vulnerable low and moderate income residents in crisis.

## B. Problem Statement

Together, the Sebago Lakes region communities of Bridgton, Casco, Harrison, Naples, Raymond, and Sebago share a population of 19,673 people, making it the 9<sup>th</sup> largest community in the state, ahead of the cities of Augusta, Scarborough, Saco, Westbrook, and Waterville. Whether measured in population, housing units, or jobs, the region has grown almost 18% since 1990, faster than the rest of Cumberland County and the state. Rapid growth demands planning for municipal facilities, services, and infrastructure, in terms of expansion in use as well as capacity and level of service. Unlike the cities it rivals in population, the Lakes Region, as a collection of smaller towns, lacks professional planning capacity to prepare for the opportunities of growth.



One of the basic functions of government is to protect its citizens. But the demand for improved public safety has outpaced even population growth. One measure of demand is the volume of Emergency 911 calls. For example, Naples Dispatch, which serves the towns of Casco, Harrison, Naples, and Sebago, reports that in the last year alone, call volume increased 25% to 23,457 calls. By contrast, the population of its service area grew just 1% to 10,665 people.



Collectively, there is a minimum level of public safety to meet the needs of a population of 20,000 people, which increases dramatically in the summer. One barometer is spending. Combined, Lakes Region towns spend just over \$2 million dollars on public safety.

### Public Safety Expenditures, Fiscal Year 2001

Town	2001 Population	Population Class	Actual FY 2001 Expenditure
<b>Bridgton</b>	4,596	3,500-4,999	\$861,178
<b>Casco</b>	3,525	3,500-4,999	\$174,888
<b>Harrison</b>	2,363	2,000-3,499	\$169,194
<b>Frye Island</b>	1,400	1,000-1,999	\$35,363
<b>Naples</b>	3,322	2,000-3,499	\$243,850
<b>Raymond</b>	4,422	3,500-4,999	\$402,353
<b>Sebago</b>	1,455	1,000-1,999	\$128,418
<b>Total</b>	21,083		\$2,015,244

Individually, Lakes Region towns maintain an infrastructure that relies largely on volunteers. In the area of police, some towns contract with the County Sheriff's Department for additional services, while others rely on regional patrol coverage paid for by county taxes.

### Current Public Safety Infrastructure in the Sebago Lakes Region

Town	Dispatch	Fire	Police	Emergency Medical Services
<b>Bridgton</b>	Municipal	Call volunteers	Municipal force	Contract services
<b>Casco</b>	Naples Regional	Call volunteers	County coverage	Call volunteers
<b>Frye Island</b>	Raymond Regional	Call volunteers	County contract	Contract services
<b>Harrison</b>	Naples Regional	Call volunteers	County contract	Contract services
<b>Naples</b>	Naples Regional	Call volunteers	County contract	Per diem volunteers
<b>Raymond</b>	Raymond Regional	Call volunteers	County coverage	Full-time professionals
<b>Sebago</b>	Naples Regional	Call volunteers	County coverage	Per diem volunteers

For the same dollars, towns of similar size buy a higher level of service. For example, in Fiscal Year 2001, the Town of Windham (population 15,150) spent \$2,185,350 for public safety, with an emergency 911 call volume of 25,138. For its expenditure, which is comparable to the total of what the Lakes Region towns reflected in this proposal are individually spending, Windham has developed an extensive infrastructure, including 35 full-time and 83 part-time professionals in the areas of dispatch, fire, police, and emergency medical services. The town's public safety services include 24-hour police patrol, a crime investigation unit, fire safety prevention, police officers in schools – even operation of a skateboard park for youth. Given the economies of scale, a regional approach offers the Lakes Region towns the most cost effective option for achieving higher levels of service.

Currently, Lakes Region towns host a number of cooperative efforts. The fire departments of Casco and Naples share a \$500,000 ladder truck, saving \$250,000 per town on the purchase price of two trucks. Naples Dispatch provides coverage for Naples, Casco, Harrison, and Sebago, while Raymond Dispatch covers Raymond, Poland, and Frye Island. A water patrol for Long Lake is proposed by bordering towns. These efforts have led to further discussions by managers, fire chiefs, and boards of selectmen on other ventures.

### *Impact on Lakes Region community and persons of low and moderate income*

The current level of public safety infrastructure maintained by Lakes Region towns provides a level of service that negatively impacts people in crisis, particularly the elderly, mentally ill, and victims of child and domestic abuse as well as low and moderate income residents of villages and downtowns.

***Unpredictable response time:*** An emergency 911 call will first be routed to the Cumberland County Communications Center in Windham, where the caller reports critical information to the dispatcher. The call is then routed to one of three local dispatch centers – Bridgton, Naples, or Raymond, where the caller must again repeat the situation. For an elderly resident with a medical emergency, the wait may be confusing and life-threatening. Depending on the town and the nature of the crisis, she may have to wait as long as 30 minutes for assistance – from a trained volunteer, a contract ambulance service, or a town EMT. With people over 60 comprising a larger and faster growing percentage of the population in the Lakes Region (17.9%) than the rest of Cumberland County (17%), this scenario promises to become more familiar in the future. Both Raymond and Naples report that the elderly generate over 25% of all rescue calls. Regionalization of public safety services would allow an elderly resident of Sebago, for example, to describe her situation just once to dispatch with the expectation that emergency service would be provided considerably faster than is currently the case.

***Inconsistent level of service:*** Increasingly, calls to 911 have become the first impulse for new residents enlisting help for non-emergency situations, such as property checks and road kill. But for victims of domestic violence, public safety is often the first, the second, the third, and in some cases, the last call they will ever make. Family Crisis Services of Portland reports that a decade ago, there were 11 requests for assistance from abused women in the Lakes Region. In 2002, there were over 300. Through a new pilot program, the Bridgton Police have agreed to furnish next day incident reports to the local Family Crisis office, ensuring that abused women in Bridgton will be offered counseling and shelter. But for a victim in Casco, for example, the level of service would vary – a different officer from the Cumberland County Sheriff's Department or the Maine State Police might be called to respond each time, not knowing they have arrived at a household in continual crisis.

***Limited capacity for prevention.*** Downtown Bridgton, East Raymond, Naples Causeway, Downtown Harrison, North Bridgton, Webb Mills, Edes Falls, Raymond Village, East Sebago, South Casco – all are charming centers with vulnerable, historic buildings in need of renovation. 2000 Census statistics show that low and moderate income residents are likely to call these built-up areas home. With on-call, volunteer fire departments, there is limited capacity for fire safety education, prevention, or inspection, either on a regular basis or for mass gathering purposes. With a coordination of resources, Lakes Region towns would be better able to support a safety specialist to ensure that treasured buildings and older housing stock do not fall victim to faulty wiring, sagging roofs, and improperly used space heaters.

## **C. Development of Strategy**

With Raymond as the lead applicant, the seven Lakes Region communities of Bridgton, Casco, Frye Island, Harrison, Naples, Raymond, and Sebago request \$10,000 to conduct a planning study on the regionalization of public safety services, including fire, police, emergency medical, and emergency management. The goal of regionalization is to create a consistent, predictable, and satisfactory level of service throughout the Lakes Region that will particularly benefit the elderly, mentally ill, victims of child abuse and domestic violence, and other vulnerable low and moderate income residents in crisis.

Through the planning process, Lake Region towns will examine opportunities to share both governance and costs associated with administration, planning, staffing, training,

facilities, equipment, purchasing, programs and services, and contracts for services. The study, which will be managed by a steering committee with representatives from each of the seven towns, will include the following components:

- Articulation of *shared goals*
- *Inventory* of existing services, including providers, capacity, demand, delivery methods, and level of service
- Recognition of *local differences*
- Agreement on *desired* level of service and standards for delivery
- Analysis of *alternative* service delivery structures
- Determination of *costs* - start-up, capital & operating plus cost saving, sharing, and containment strategies

CDBG funds will support professional planning assistance for the following tasks:

- Facilitation of steering committee and citizen involvement **Cost: \$2,500**
- GIS mapping of existing public safety coverage and infrastructure **Cost: \$1,000**
- Inventory that compares gaps in current level of service to desired levels based on population size and growth projections **Cost: \$3,000**
- Cost analysis for alternative delivery structures in the areas of dispatch, fire, police, and/or emergency management **Cost: \$3,500**

CDBG funds are necessary to support the Lakes Region Public Safety Study for a number of reasons:

***The Lakes Region lacks professional planning capacity.*** There are no full-time planners among the seven Lakes Region communities. What part-time planners exist are under contract for limited purposes, such as site review or comprehensive planning.

***Third party facilitation is critical.*** Public safety services and assets reflect the pride, commitment, and history of local towns. Whether regionalization will mean consolidation, coordination, or simply more cooperation will depend on each town trusting that the planning process is fair and honest.

***The Lakes Region lacks the financial capacity to grow without regionalization.***

Residents can not simply tax and bond their way out of rising demand, with each community building public facilities and infrastructure to support its own growth. Compared to the county as a whole, the Lakes Region is in economic distress. In 1998, the region's major employer, the Bridgton Knitting Mill, shut down, eliminating 300 jobs. At over 4% for 2001, the unemployment rate in Bridgton, Harrison, and Naples remains almost double the county's rate. The lack of job opportunities are reflected in the area's income statistics.

- In 1990, 51.07% of Bridgton residents lived in households making 80% or less than the county median household income. For all towns combined, the overall, the rate is 39%. Although comparable statistics for individuals are not yet available from the 2000 Census, preliminary reports indicate a downward slide.

- In 2000, well over half (53.8%) of the residents in the Lakes Region lived in downtowns, villages, and neighborhoods where the median household income was at or below 80% of the county's median household income.
- Since 1990, the number of individuals living in poverty has crept upwards to 8.9%, a full point above the county's rate.

#### **D. Project Leverage**

Seven towns plus Cumberland County government will each make a non-cash contribution through the assignment of officials to participate in the regional study. These representatives, to be decided by each partner, may include managers, finance directors, fire chiefs, dispatchers, first responders, law enforcement, social service agencies, senior citizens and other personnel, whether residents, town volunteers, or paid professionals. Representatives may participate in a number of levels – as part of the steering committee, as a member of a subcommittee in a public safety service area – dispatch, fire, police, emergency medical, or emergency management, or as a contributor to a particular planning task, such as the inventory or cost analysis. The following is a breakdown of the *minimum* in-kind value of this substantial planning study.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Basis</b>	<b>Total</b>
Steering Committee	8 representatives x 12 meetings x 2 hours x \$25* per hour	\$4,800
Safety Subcommittees	8 representatives x 6 meetings x 2 hours x 5 subcommittees x \$11** per hour	\$5,280
Special tasks	8 professionals x \$11** per hour x 12 hours	\$1,056
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$11,136.00</b>

\*Based on average annual management salary of \$50,000 per year

\*\*Based on annual average salary of \$22,000 in the Sebago Lakes Labor Market Area

Given the scope and scale of the planning study, the steering committee will evaluate early on to what extent \$10,000 is enough funding to accomplish a comprehensive analysis of all public safety areas. Some inventory, for example, may already exist in the form of recent comprehensive plan updates. Other information, such as current level of service, might be defined with the assistance of residents interacting with Horizons/60, Family Crisis Services, or Tri-County Mental Health. At this point, other contributions may be sought in the form of grants or additional in-house time.

#### **E. Citizen Participation**

The Lakes Region communities share a rich history of cooperation in a number of areas, including education, watershed management, transportation planning, and economic development. The following efforts, funded partially by area towns with active participation from local residents, represent the highest levels of cooperation in the Lakes Region.

- For over 30 years, School Administrative District 61 has delivered public education to students in Sebago, Bridgton, Casco, and Naples.
- For over 30 years, the Lakes Environmental Association has served as the leading environmental protection organization, providing education, monitoring, advocacy, and regulatory assistance for the Sebago and Long Lake watersheds.
- Since 1988, towns from Windham to Bridgton have participated in corridor committees to develop a regional investment plan for Route 302.

- Since 2000, the Lake Region Development Council has served as the single point of contact for business retention, expansion, and attraction for six towns.

Within the last five years, each town finally achieved a level of growth that required professional town management. This consistent level of leadership has really set the stage for trust and collaboration. Through a number of planning efforts over the last year, the area of public facilities, infrastructure and services has emerged as the leading area of study for future cooperation. For example, a number of towns, including Bridgton, Casco, Frye Island, and Raymond began updating their comprehensive plans, giving them an opportunity to examine the future growth of public facilities, infrastructure, and services. Other towns, including Harrison and Naples, are forming committees to begin the update. Since December, 2002, representatives from these comprehensive planning committees have been meeting once a month to discuss mutual areas for cooperation. Already, they have a monthly schedule of workshops planned for area residents in such areas as transportation and land-use policies. In addition to these public forums, the town managers of the Lakes Region have been meeting on a monthly basis to discuss areas of mutual concern. As evidenced by the attached articles from the *Bridgton News*, the regionalization of public facilities, infrastructure, and services has been the leading topic. Even the fire chiefs have begun to meet on an ad-hoc basis to discuss improved fire protection. Because these meetings did not arise from the idea of applying for a grant, they are impossible to properly capture and document.

Beyond the towns, county level agencies have also served as a catalyst for regionalization. Recently, Cumberland County has initiated a series of dialogues with Lakes Region towns to consolidate dispatch and policing services at the county level. In a needs assessment conducted by the Greater Portland Council of Governments last fall, regional service delivery emerged as the singular need specifically identified by every town manager.

On February 27, 2003, municipal and county interests participated in a regional forum entitled "*Coordination or Consolidation: Regional Service Delivery in the Lakes Region.*" The event, hosted by the Greater Portland Council of Governments and the Town of Raymond, attracted forty residents from the towns of Bridgton, Casco, Harrison, Naples, Raymond, Standish, and Sebago, including state legislators, town managers, boards of selectmen, fire

and rescue chiefs, and comprehensive plan committee members. Cumberland County contributed its manager, emergency communications staff, and emergency management director. At the meeting, participants worked in small groups to develop regional delivery plans for the hypothetical City of Lakeville (population 43,862) in specific service areas, including public safety, public works, education, and transportation (see picture). Although the spotlight was not exclusively on public safety, the overwhelming participation from chiefs and first responders persuaded town



managers, Cumberland County, and GPCOG to work together in earnest to pursue a grant for a regional public safety study. Public participation via regional forums, working groups, and special interest roundtables will continue to inspire progress toward regionalization.

# THE BRIDGTON

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12 PAGES

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2 SECTIONS

## Regionalization presents obstacles, opportunities

by Mike Corrigan  
Staff Writer

RAYMOND — Magic wands may be coming out of the ears of the Harry Potter set, but they are in short supply in government circles, these days. When asked to say the magic word, government officials just mutter, "Ouch," instead. Or even something R-rated.

Which may explain why the concept of regionalization has been embraced so fervently.

A GPCOG-sponsored regional meeting last Thursday seemed to demonstrate, however, that while regionalization does indeed hold hope for so few economies and improvements in service delivery in several areas of local and county government, it probably will not be, and cannot be, a panacea. Worth looking at, for sure — but a panacea? There is no such animal.

"Remember how, a decade ago, privatization was the big thing?" Council of Governments Executive Director Neal Allen reminded attendees last Wednesday. "We've seen some benefits, but that didn't work out exactly as we hoped."

Informal workshop groups

discussed five areas last Wednesday, trying to discern strategies and advantages of further regionalization for the City of Lakeville, a completely hypothetical Rurópolis (pop. 43,862) consisting of the "neighborhoods" of Harrison, Bridgton, Sebago, Standish, Windham, Raymond, Casco and Naples.

Lakeville, in short, had Sebago Lake surrounded — and therein lay some benefits, as well as some challenges, work-

shoppers found.

Some of the most hopeful consolidations might be done in the area of emergency and fire and communications services — but those areas, along with education, faced some of the greatest political challenges, too, workshopers said. Local control is the countering principle to regionalization, and many are particularly jealous (and rightfully so) of the volunteer efforts in local fire and rescue areas. While

the scene is changing, and growth will change it more, some awfully good services are being delivered locally now — and sometimes for less than might be accomplished under a new regional system.

Since workshopers were painting with a broad brush, costs were most difficult to pin down. But some sharing of services seemed almost certain to save money. Others merely figured to generate better government for approximately the

same outlay.

Wednesday's working definition of regionalization, in fact, included both kinds of efficiencies, the phrase "for the same or lesser amount of money" was often used.

The State of Maine, of course, looking at historically huge budget deficits, has the bottom line on its mind when it encourages regionalization.

And encourage the state does, and will.

The towns of Freeport, Fel-

mouth, Yarmouth and Cumberland already are working hard to regionalize transportation infrastructure and also "with regional public safety issues, COG's Neal Allen noted. Gorbham and Windham such as ready own a ladder truck, to they hope to share another one to be housed at the town line in South Windham.

Also, many county (and Lake Region) towns already

LAKEVILLE, Page 10

## Lakeville: obstacles, opportunities

(Continued from Page 1)

have regionalized many services.

Casco has long been a leader in this area, sharing an assessor with New Gloucester, a ladder truck with Naples, a transfer station with three other towns and even a historical society, with Raymond.

Casco Town Manager David Morton asked last week if credits might be given, in a tightening economy, for regionalization efforts already effected.

Yes, almost certainly, said

House Minority Leader Joe Bruno, who represents one end of the mythical Lakeville.

"You've basically got a year," Rep. Bruno told the group of 50 or so town managers, selectmen, planners and interested citizens last Wednesday. "But in two years you're going to have to share if you expect to get any money (from the state)."

Rep. Bruno said Governor Baldacci's plan stresses regionalization, and he sees a buy-in for the idea, from both

sides of the aisle.

Even some education money will be tied to regionalization efforts. "School districts are going to have to share, too," the legislator said.

"Dispatch services, emergency rescue services and fire departments all might benefit from consolidation and cooperation," Bruno said. "Now, some of you are saying that the other town doesn't do it as well as you do. Well, train them then. If you share, we'll give you some money to do it."

The state has several carrots and sticks ready to wave at the towns. State Revenue Sharing figures to be a big carrot, Bruno indicated.

Bruno feels that, done wisely, regionalization — as defined by the workshop title, "Consolidation and Cooperation" — can bring taxes down overall.

"Maine has the highest tax burden in the nation and the Governor's plan is to bring us to the middle of the pack," he said.

County Manager Peter Crichton said that dispatch services was one area where communities might work more closely together.

Naples Dispatcher Deb Plummer noted, however, that efficiencies of service might be lost in consolidation of dis-

patch services, and local conflict levels suffer, even as dollars are saved.

COG's David Willauer noted that opportunities for consolidation and cooperation exist for improving Route 302, providing for bike and hiking trails, providing public transit and more.

Caroline Allen noted that jobs and the economy are best approached through regional efforts.

Neal Allen said COG's large-group discussions will continue. He hoped that some awareness had been raised, and a fruitful discussion started by last week's workshop.

"People think of this area as very small towns, but it is a community of 40,000 people. It is growing, it's changing," Allen, who lives in Sebago, said. "We need to plan for that community, plan development. We need to keep this kind of dialogue going."

The issue will receive more publicity, more notice, more ink. The state will make sure it does. And the Town of Raymond has dived into the inquiry in earnest, pursuing a CDBG grant to study "Regional Service Provision in the Lake Region."

Regionalization may never be a magic wand, but many believe it could prove a very useful tool, nonetheless.

## Already cooperating

Extensive efforts at regionalization already have developed almost naturally, over the years here.

What follows is not a complete list, but rather salient examples of regionalization.

**Governance:** Cumberland County, shared assessor for Casco and New Gloucester, Lake Region TV.

**Education:** Consolidated school districts including SAD 6, SAD 61 and SAD 17; USM Senior College in Bridgton, LRVC, SMVTC courses, Casco Learning Center, Bridgton Learning Center.

**Recreation:** Youth soccer, basketball, baseball and softball leagues; shared interdepartmental resources and programs.

**Special services:** Bridgton Hospital, PROP, SMAAA, Horizons'80, Bridgton Community Center, Bridgton Regional Community Coalition, Family Crisis Shelter, Tri-County Mental Health, etc.

**Public safety:** Mutual aid, Naples Dispatch (serves Casco, Harrison and Sebago, as well as Naples), State Police, County Sheriffs, Casco and Naples shared ladder truck, proposed Long Lake Water Safety Patrol, shared fire stations in Standish, Gorbham and Windham.

**Planning:** Joint meetings of comprehensive plan committees, Greater Portland Council of Governments, LRDC, Economic and Community Development: Lake Region Development Council, Greater Bridgton-Lake Region Chamber of Commerce, Casco-Raymond Business Alliance, Oxford Hills Growth Council, proposed Windham industrial "superpark."

**Public Works:** Casco-Naples Transfer Station, shared bulky waste transfer station, Portland Water District, Regional Waste Systems, GPCOG.

**Transportation:** Regional transportation Advisory Committee, Route 302 & Yon, Regional Transportation shuttle service.

**Natural Resources:** Lakes Environmental Association, Portland Water District, Loon Echo Land Trust, Cumberland County Soil & Water Conservation District.

**Historical Preservation:** Raymond-Casco Historical Society.



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FIFTY CENT

by Mike Corrigan  
Staff Writer

On the one hand, consider economy of scale, cooperation and possible fiscal savings — and on the other hand, consider true "local control," and old-fashioned town pride.

Three area town managers told Monday's lunch meeting of the Bridgton Community Coalition that a healthy dose of regional delivery of services could well develop in the Lake Region.

"Many of the complications are mostly in people's minds," Casco Town Manager David Morton said. "If you can get through that, regionalization works pretty well."

The Town of Casco is a classic case in point: Casco has successfully shared resources

costs with its neighbors, splitting purchase and maintenance costs of a ladder fire truck with Naples, and running within its borders a small regional solid waste handling facility, concentrating on bulky wastes. Cosec also has saved "\$30,000 or \$40,000 a year," by working through its Naples, Fla. representative

Some historical forces do work against regionalization. However, during this election campaign, candidate after candidate mentioned that Maine is a state large in size and small in population — so having towns share services makes financial and management sense.

It doesn't seem likely that the legislature will throw any roadblocks in the way of regionalization.

Harbison Town Manager Mike Thorne underlined one problem, though.

"It would be a hard time selling some of these ideas,"

"I would hate to lose the ability myself, to tell my good friends 'We need a STOP sign here.'"

On the other hand, those who favor regionalization in one form or another have been well accepted.

## Page 12, The Bridgton News, November 21, 2012

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